AMSAT News Service Weekly Bulletins
Issue: ANS-344
Date: 2006-12-10
Sources: amsat-ans-2006-ans-344-weekly.txt

AMSAT NEWS SERVICE
ANS-344

ANS is a free, weekly, news and information service of AMSAT North America, The Radio Amateur Satellite Corporation. ANS reports on the activities of a worldwide group of Amateur Radio operators who share an active interest in designing, building, launching and communicating through analog and digital Amateur Radio satellites.

Please send any amateur satellite news or reports to:
ans-editor@amsat.org

In this edition:

* RAFT, ANDE, MARSCom, and GeneSat-1 Satellites Going Up This Week
* Last Chance for Federal CFC Contributions to AMSAT This Week
* Send Your Name and Callsign to the Moon
* Please Make Your Updates to the AMSAT Volunteer Reporting System
* AMSAT-UK Initiates Push for Region 1 Microwave Satellite Allocation
* Unique Donation Opportunity Through The Pension Protection Act
* Satellite News From All Over
* ARISS Status Report for the Week of December 4, 2006

SB SAT @ AMSAT $ANS-344.01
RAFT, ANDE, MARSCom, and GeneSat-1 Satellites Going Up This Week

AMSAT News Service Bulletin 344.01
From AMSAT HQ SILVER SPRING, MD.
December 10, 2006
To All RADIO AMATEURS
BID: $ANS-344.01

Space Shuttle Discovery was successfully launched on Saturday carrying to orbit three new satellites, RAFT-1, MARSCOM and ANDE designed, built, and tested by the Midshipmen of the US Naval Academy's Satellite Laboratory in Annapolis, Maryland.

The RAFT-1 and ANDE satellite downlinks will be 145.825 MHz. The frequencies used by MARSCOM are on Navy-Marine Corps MARS frequencies.

For full technical details please refer to:
http://www.ew.usna.edu/%7Ebruninga/ande-raft-ops.html

Another feature of the RAFT mission will allow amateur radio operators to listen to the signal as the satellite crosses the National Space Surveillance Network satellite radar tracking system. RAFT has a 216.98 MHz direct conversion receiver down to 145.825 MHz so you will hear the radar ping on RAFT's downlink. It will be a tone proportional to the Doppler as it flies through the radar fence, lasting about one second.

GeneSat-1, a secondary payload aboard the Minotaur Launch Vehicle, will launch from the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport (MARS) at NASA Wallops Flight Facility on December 11, 2006, about 7:00am EST. The Minotaur launch window is 3 hours, 1200z-1500z. GeneSat-1 is a 10 x 10 x 30 cm. spacecraft, which will conduct a cellular biology technology demonstration.

Of particular interest to the amateur radio satellite community, is the GeneSat-1 beacon. Operating at 437.075 MHz FM, the beacon sends an AX.25 packet every 5 seconds; the packet contains data about the spacecraft systems operation. Full details are available on the mission website at http://www.genesat1.org.

[ANS thanks the US Naval Academy and GeneSat teams for the above information]

/EX

SB SAT @ AMSAT $ANS-344.02
Last Chance for Federal CFC Contributions to AMSAT This Week

AMSAT News Service Bulletin 344.02
From AMSAT HQ SILVER SPRING, MD.
December 10, 2006
To All RADIO AMATEURS
BID: $ANS-344.02

Attention Federal Employees - This is your final week to support AMSAT through your pledge in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). Gunther Meisse, W8GSM, and AMSAT treasurer has announced that any Federal employee can make a contribution to the Radio Amateur Satellite Corporation when they complete their pledge for 2006. AMSAT is listed as Agency Number CFC 2944.

Your contribution directly supports AMSAT's educational outreach and satellite construction projects including work on AMSAT-Eagle. Pledges may be made by Federal civilian, postal and military donors during the campaign season.

The campaign runs from September 1st to December 15th, 2006.

To learn more about CFC visit the CFC website at:
http://www.opm.gov/cfc/

[ANS thanks Gunther Meisse, W8GSM, AMSAT Treasurer for the above information]

/EX

SB SAT @ AMSAT $ANS-344.03
Send Your Name and Callsign to the Moon

AMSAT News Service Bulletin 344.03
From AMSAT HQ SILVER SPRING, MD.
December 10, 2006
To All RADIO AMATEURS
BID: $ANS-344.03

The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) is scheduled to launch the SELENE lunar orbiter by an H-IIA Launch Vehicle in the summer of 2007.

The major objective of the SELENE mission is to acquire scientific data to answer key questions on the Moon's origin and evolution. It is the first fully-fledged lunar exploration project since the Apollo program.

JAXA is collecting names and will have them etched on a sheet which is attached to the spacecraft. This is a worldwide campaign sponsored by JAXA in cooperation with The Planetary Society of Japan and The Planetary Society of the U.S.A.

Please send your name and message within the following letter limits
before January 31, 2007:
   In Japanese: Name should be within 10 characters, and the message
                should be within 20 characters.
   In English: Name should be within 10 letters, and the message
                should be within 40 letters.

More information is availabe in English at:
http://www.jaxa.jp/pr/event/selene/index_e.html

[ANS thanks JAXA for the above information]

/EX

SB SAT @ AMSAT $ANS-344.04
Please Make Your Updates to the AMSAT Volunteer Reporting System

AMSAT News Service Bulletin 344.04
From AMSAT HQ SILVER SPRING, MD.
December 10, 2006
To All RADIO AMATEURS
BID: $ANS-344.04

Attention AMSAT Volunteers:
It is that time of the year again.
We need to be sure as many volunteer hours as possible have been
reported to the VRS (Volunteer Reporting System) on the AMSAT web
site. Over the last few years thousands of dollars of volunteer time
have been reported and we are sure this year will be our largest
given all the work that has done on Eagle.

If you are already registered on the VRS site please take a few
minutes and report these 2006 hours. If you have not reported before,
please visit amsat.org, register, and help us keep track of this
important aspect of the AMSAT mission. We'll keep the year open until
the middle of January but hope you will take the time within the next
couple weeks to update your report. You may combine your efforts for
the entire year into one filing if that would make the process more
convenient.

[ANS thanks Gunther Meisse, W8GSM, AMSAT Treasurer for the above information]

/EX

SB SAT @ AMSAT $ANS-344.05
AMSAT-UK Initiates Push for Region 1 Microwave Satellite Allocation

AMSAT News Service Bulletin 344.05
From AMSAT HQ SILVER SPRING, MD.
December 10, 2006
To All RADIO AMATEURS
BID: $ANS-344.05

Graham, G3VZV announced last week that AMSAT-UK is working with RSGB on a
proposal paper to seek to establish access to the 3400-3410 MHz band for
the Amateur Satellite Service in IARU Region 1. This meeting is scheduled
for February, 2007.

At present only Regions 2 and 3 have such an ITU allocation and here in
Region 1, even terrestrial activity is only by footnote to the Radio
Regulations or by national rule making.

We have a list of Region 1 countries that do have such terrestrial access - see http://www.uk.amsat.org/images/3400region1.JPG

If anyone has any corrections or additions to the list please let Graham know [callsign at amsat.org].

[ANS thanks Graham, G3VZV for the above information]

/EX

SB SAT @ AMSAT $ANS-344.06
Unique Donation Opportunity Through The Pension Protection Act

AMSAT News Service Bulletin 344.06
From AMSAT HQ SILVER SPRING, MD.
December 10, 2006
To All RADIO AMATEURS
BID: $ANS-344.06

Recent legislation passed by Congress and signed by President Bush can help AMSAT raise the funds needed to build Eagle. The law, called the Pension Protection Act (PPA), includes a provision enabling AMSAT to raise substantially more money than might have been previously possible. However, time is short to take full advantage of this unique opportunity.

Serious construction work must be funded this year to have Eagle ready to orbit by the target of 2009.

Basically, here's the story on how the new law can help Eagle fly!

The PPA provides that U.S. taxpayers with IRAs who have reached the age of 70-1/2, may contribute to qualified charities, part or all (up to $100,000 per year or $200,000 for married couples filing jointly), of the money they must annually withdraw from their IRAs.

Thus, many AMSAT members and other supporters of the amateur radio space program have a marvelous opportunity to keep the Eagle project on track.

If you must withdraw a certain amount from your IRA each year, there is a big advantage to making such withdrawals as direct contributions to AMSAT rather than merely receiving the distributions and then contributing in the usual manner. Under PPA, the amount you contribute directly is NOT counted as income and thus may put you into a lower tax bracket. It may also reduce the percentage of your Social Security income subject to taxation.

Key provisions of the new legislation to keep in mind:

1. Donors must hold either a conventional or Roth IRA.

2. Donors must be at least 70-1/2 years of age.

3. Contributions must be made directly from the IRA to the charitable organization not to a donor- advised fund, private foundation, gift annuity or trust.

4. Donations may be made this year and next only, and must be made by December 31, 2006 and December 31, 2007.

5. The maximum amount a contributor may donate each year is $100,000.

6. Direct contributions to qualified charities from IRAs, in accordance with the PPA provisions, are NOT counted as taxable income.

If you are 70-1/2 or older and have an IRA, you are in a position to take advantage of this potential windfall for the Eagle project. AMSAT urges you to first check with your tax advisor for specifics regarding your individual situation, then ask your IRA custodian to transfer to AMSAT part or all of what you are required to withdraw. Be sure to have this transfer completed before December 31st.

Let's all of us do our part to get Eagle into orbit.

* Have your IRA custodian call the AMSAT office to get information on how to transfer your contribution. The number 301-589-6062. Office hours are 10 AM to 6 PM EST.

[ANS thanks BIll, W3XO, for the above information]

/EX

SB SAT @ AMSAT $ANS-344.07
Satellite News From All Over

AMSAT News Service Bulletin 344.07
From AMSAT HQ SILVER SPRING, MD.
December 10, 2006
To All RADIO AMATEURS
BID: $ANS-344.07

* Heads up for European satellite operators! Paul, 2E1EUB says he will be active from Scotland on the birds from December 10-14.

* Ed Long, WA4SWJ, Editor of The AMSAT Journal announced this week that the Nov/Dec 06 issue of The AMSAT Journal was uploaded to the printer. You should have it in you mailbox soon. Thanks to all the Journal contributors.

* The HC8N (Galapagos Islands) contest group was active on the AO-51 and SO-50 satellites prior to the CQ WW CW Contest. A total of 16 QSOs were made via these satellites in 6 countries. Ramon, XE1KK - who had given many operators their first satellite QSO with the Galapagos finally worked HC8N via SO-50. The HC8N 2006 satellite station consisted of a FT-50R and an "Arrow" antenna. Bruce, AA5B and Mark, N5OT assisted with the satellite activity. QSL via W5UE.

* Matthias, DD1US has a "Sounds from Space" webpage at http://www.dd1us.de. He has collected recordings of space objects like MIR, ISS and satellites presently in orbit which may be of help to people identify transmissions they might have received.

[ANS thanks everyone for the above information]

/EX

SB SAT @ AMSAT $ANS-344.08
ARISS Status Report for the Week of December 4, 2006

AMSAT News Service Bulletin 344.08
From AMSAT HQ SILVER SPRING, MD.
December 10, 2006
To All RADIO AMATEURS
BID: $ANS-344.08

1. School Contacts to be Scheduled

The Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) team continues to work on scheduling school contacts for December.

2. ARRL Article on Henri D'Haese School Contact

The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) ran an article on Mike Lopez-Alegria's Amateur Radio contact with children attending the Henri D'Haese Primary School in Belgium. See: http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2006/11/28/102/?nc=1

3. Debrief Session with Space Visitor

On Tuesday, November 28, the ARISS team spoke with space participant Anousheh Ansari to discuss her experience with Amateur Radio contacts while onboard the ISS. She provided valuable feedback to the team.

4. Astronaut Participates in SKYWARN Recognition Day

The National Weather Service (NWS) and the American Radio Relay League co-sponsored SKYWARN Recognition Day on Saturday, December 2 to thank those hams who volunteer to act as storm spotters and who are trained in emergency communications. The activity called for Amateur Radio perators to exchange contact information, including a short weather report for their location, with as many NWS stations as possible. Mike Lopez-Alegria, KE5GTK, took part in the activities and was heard speaking to hams in Texas.

5. ARRL Story on ARISS Mentor

The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) ran a story on Barry Cohen, K2JV. Cohen mentored the Salt Brook Elementary School Amateur Radio on the ISS contact in New Providence, New Jersey, in June of this year and was recently named "Amateur of the Year." See: http://www.arrl.org/?artid=6981

6. ARRL Article on Shuttle STS-116 Crew

The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) ran a story covering the upcoming shuttle launch which will carry ham astronauts Sunita Williams, KD5PLB, and Christer Fugelsang, KE5CGR/SA0AFS. Both plan to participate in Amateur Radio contacts during their missions. See: http://www.arrl.org/?artid=6996

7. ARRL QST Articles

The December issue of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) QST ran an article, "Civilian Space Traveler and Astronauts Pull Off ARISS Triple Header". The story was about Jeff Williams, Thomas Reiter and Anousheh Ansari and described their recent Amateur Radio on the International Space Station school contacts.

Another story, "Kids Day June 2007", summarized ARRL's on-the-air operating event for kids. Astronaut Dorothy Metcalf-Lindenburger, KE5DAT, made the comment, "As an astronaut, I enjoyed volunteering my time to encourage kids to study for their license so they can speak to folks all around the world and even on the International Space Station!"

[ANS thanks Carol, KB3LKI for the above information]

/EX

In addition to regular membership, AMSAT offers membership in the President's Club. Members of the President's Club, as sustaining donors to AMSAT Project Funds, will be eligible to receive additional benefits. Application forms are available from the AMSAT Office.

73,
This week's ANS Editor,
JoAnne Maenpaa, K9JKM